

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 03960 151058Z
ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 SS-15 INR-10 SSO-00
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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 8718

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 3960

FROM THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG, UNGA, XF, MOPS, LE

SUBJECT: MIDDLE EAST VISIT OF AMBASSADOR LEONARD AND
NATHANIEL HOWELL

REF: (A) STATE 157035, (B) STATE 178558

1. USEFUL AS I THINK IT WOULD BE FOR JIM LEONARD TO
HAVE FIRST HAND VIEW OF SITUATION HERE, I HAVE SERIOUS
RESERVATIONS ABOUT HIS COMING TO LEBANON AT THIS TIME
UNLESS WE ARE PREPARED TO SUPPORT INTERNATIONALIZATION
OF CURRENT CRISIS IN BEIRUT (AS SUGGESTED PARA 3 OF USUN
2874). THIS VISIT WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO OUR GODFATHER IMAGE
AND RAISE EXPECTATIONS OF US INVOLVEMENT WHICH I SUSPECT
WOULD BE UNJUSTIFIED. IN PARTICULAR, IT WOULD LEAD
SARKIS TO EXPECT US TO DO MORE ABOUT ISRAELI ATTITUDE RE
CHRISTIAN ENCLAVES IN SOUTH LEBANON THAN WE SEEM
READY TO DO. ON OTHER HAND, IF WE ARE READY TO DO
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SOMETHING DECISIVE ABOUT ENCLAVES PROBLEM, I WOULD
WELCOME VISIT.

2. FURTHERMORE, WE SUSPECT VISIT TO SOUTH LEBANON
WOULD COMPLICATE THE TASK OF UNIFIL. THE LESS PRO-
MINENT THE UNITED STATES ASSOCIATION WITH UNIFIL, THE
MORE EFFECTIVE UNIFIL WILL BE IN PERSUADING THE

PALESTINIANS NOT TO CHALLENGE IT. REJECTIONISTS ARE
ALREADY ATTACKING FATAH FOR ITS COOPERATION WITH UNIFIL
AND ACCUSING FATAH OF COOPERATING IN "AMERICAN/ISRAELI
SCHEMES." SINCE US DOES NOT HAVE TROOPS IN THE AREA,
THERE IS NO OVERT REASON FOR USG OFFICIAL TO VISIT
THERE.

3. IN ADDITION, SECURITY REMAINS A MAJOR PROBLEM.
NOBODY CAN PROVIDE ADEQUATE SECURITY IN SOUTH LEBANON,
WITNESS THE TACT THAT REJECTIONISTS BRIEFLY CAPTURED
51 UNIFIL SOLDIERS ON JULY 13 AND THAT GUNBATTLES BETWEEN
FATAH AND REJECTIONISTS OCCURRED ON JULY 14. SECURITY
IN TRAVELING TO AND FROM BEIRUT ALSO POSES A MAJOR
PROBLEM. IF I CANNOT GO SOUTH OF BEIRUT, I DO NOT
THINK ANY OTHER AMERICAN AMBASSADOR SHOULD EITHER.
PARKER

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